

# MINUTES

## FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING

5:00 P. M., APRIL 12, 2022

Sam Minardi, Chair, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Facilities to order at 5:00p.m., DECEMBER 6, 2021 IN THE AV ROOM #301 OF CITY HALL.

### **Committee Members Present:**

Sam Minardi, Chair  
Naomi Bays  
Bobby Brown  
Jeanine Faegre (over Zoom)

### **Committee Members Absent:**

Caitlin Cook  
Pat Jones  
Shannon Snodgrass

### **Other Councilmembers Present:**

Emmett Pepper  
Chad Robinson

1. Approval of Previous Minutes – Councilmember Bays moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 12-6-2021. Councilmember Brown approved. There was no objection, and the minutes were approved.

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2. Discuss the Kanawha City Community Center HVAC replacement project and determine whether the project scope should be expanded and redefined to make the facility highly energy efficient.

Councilmember Minardi stated that Councilmember Pepper had requested that the project be discussed in this manner.

City Manager, Jonathan Storage, added that the purpose is to have discussions on how the project may progress, and to possibly recalibrate. The City put out an Expression of Interest in November for a complete redesign and replacement of the HVAC system at the Kanawha City Community Center. Something similar had already been done at the North Charleston and MLK Centers. Unlike the latter Centers, Kanawha City did not qualify for CDBG funding. Pickering and Associates was chosen as the design consultant. Shawn Simon was present to represent the company. The contract did not go before Council as the total was under \$25,000. Storage added that around January, Councilmember Pepper had asked about high energy efficiency retrofits for all of the projects. The scope of the work does not currently include that, so Storage thought that it would be best for the Facilities Committee to discuss it to provide direction as to how the Administration should proceed with the project.

Councilmember Minardi asked if the recently passed energy benchmarking bill was for all new construction. Storage replied that there is a set point in time to be used as the benchmark (2019), and a reduction of a certain percentage (possibly 10-15%) must be reached by 2030.

From the audience, Councilmember Pepper added that if the purchase of a large HVAC unit is wrong for the space, not much money will be saved. So, if they do improvements to the building later, (like insulation, upgrading windows) the unit they purchase now will not be the correct one for the space, and vice versa. The Energy Use Intensity for a typical building is 56 btu, and the building is currently at 84. Doing the improvements in a realistic way would allow the City to see savings while still adding AC to the gym. He added that the Green Initiatives fund could also be used. Pepper added that this type of project would be perfect for such a public facing building.

Storage added that he had asked the consultant, Simon, to consider Councilmember Pepper's suggestions on how it could be approached. How Capital Outlay funds can be spent depends on the goal on the project.

Simon added that the design is based on incremental work. The problem is if HVAC equipment is sized for the outcome (of using less energy), there will be output problems if the project isn't completed quickly. Either way, the building could be under or over served for multiple years. He added that these types of block buildings were not meant to be insulated, rather they were built to be durable. Foam could be sprayed in between the bricks (which is still not optimal efficiency). To insulate the outside (which is what is recommended) also means that there needs to be a new exterior to protect it. He additionally recommended that the R Value of the roof be improved through insulation

as well as window and door improvements. He advised that the first step would be to decide how much to improve the building (in terms of efficiency), then plan the remodel around that with each change incrementally getting to the goal number (whether that be 50 or 10% reduction, etc.). Simon added that a significant reduction like from 80 to 50, would probably require changes to doors, windows, roof and exterior.

Councilmember Minardi asked if they would have to put out a bid for a full audit. Simon replied that they would need to cancel the current contract with Pickering and resolicit for a new scope of work to include design services to get the desired energy rating. It would be important to factor in the difference that the new AC unit will create as well.

Councilmember Pepper asked if there was a cost-effective way to significantly increase energy efficiency. Simon replied that it is more difficult due to how the building was built. He advised that they first look at doors and windows. Lighting is the highest energy use, and would reduce the electric bill and some heat (but not significantly). He added that people generate the most heat. Councilmember Brown added that kids constantly go through the doors. Councilmember Bays suggested adding a double door system, etc.

Storage asked how similar situations had been handled, such as with schools. Simon replied that schools almost always started with upgrading their HVAC system.

Councilmember Faegre confirmed that the Kanawha Rec Center was about 50 years old. Councilmember Minardi asked when the last significant investment to the Center. From the audience, Councilmember Robinson replied that he thought the roof had been replaced, or significantly repaired, 6-8 years ago.

Councilmember Bays stated that the dilemma was which kind of HVAC system to order. Storage added that the designer would need to know the goal of energy efficiency in order to create a cost-estimate and options. Storage asked what side of the project was best to do the HVAC (with the current energy output or the estimated goal but knowing that the goal won't be reached for possibly years). Simon replied that typically the unit would be sized for the end goal. If the City picks a unit that fits the current needs of the building, and then makes major enhancements that significantly change the energy output, then the unit will be oversized. He added that an oversized unit cycles by kicking on and off constantly, which will lead to humidity issues.

Councilmember Brown asked if the current unit was sufficient enough. Simon replied that the current unit was unreliable.

Councilmember Faegre asked about the duct work. Simon replied that after the unit was sized, they would look at the duct work, and maybe make changes to make them more efficient. Councilmember Faegre asked about the maintenance of the systems. Simon replied that his company would look at units similar to what City workers were already familiar with.

Councilmember Minardi added that he was concerned further delays would lead to

increased costs due to supply chain issues.

Councilmember Bays asked what the pros and cons would be for installing the HVAC until in the winter. Simon replied that the AC would not be connected until the Spring/Summer.

Councilmember Faegre confirmed with Simon that freon would not be used. Over the life of the building the HVAC units have been changed a few times, but the consensus of the Committee was that the doors and windows were original.

Councilmember Robinson stated that he would hate for the project to have another delay. He would recommend they discuss energy efficiency later. Councilmember Faegre agreed.

Councilmember Pepper confirmed with Simon that the project would likely be delayed past the spring if they went for a 25% change in energy efficiency. This is largely due to the availability of materials and components. Councilmember Pepper added that his intention was not to delay the project for another summer.

Simon added that upgrading the two windows in the front office would benefit the entire building.

Councilmember Bays added that the Committee could pick a subject to look at comprehensively to find the thing that will save the most money (for example, changing all lights to LED). She added she would like to see a comprehensive list of all City facilities (maintenance, age, etc.). Councilmember Bays added that she would like to see a 2-year plan.

Councilmember Pepper added that he appreciated that the Committee took a hard look at the issue.

Storage added that the design of the HVAC system will proceed as planned. Simon added that they will put out bids and make a recommendation to the City for construction which they will administer. Storage added that they will continue to work with Councilmember Pepper concerning benchmarking plans.

Councilmember Bays motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Brown seconded. Meeting adjourned.

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